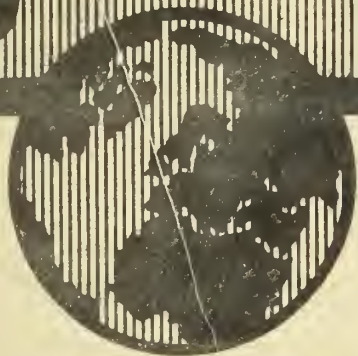


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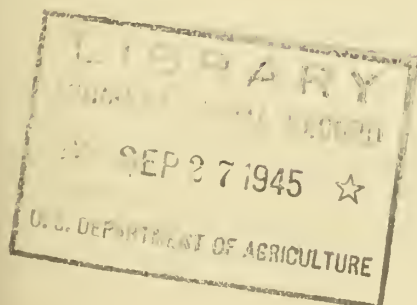
# Foreign Crops and MARKETS



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FEBRUARY 7, 1944



## LATE FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS . . .

### ARGENTINA

The first official estimate places the corn acreage in Argentina at 11,292,000 acres, or about 13 percent larger than last year's planted acreage of 10,008,000 acres. Crop conditions have been reported as extremely favorable and a good outturn is expected, in contrast with the virtual failure of the crop last year.

### INDIA

The 1943-44 wheat area in India is placed at 32,361,000 acres, which is about 4 percent less than the revised first estimate of the 1942-43 crop and is 6 percent less than the final estimate of that crop.

### ARGENTINA

The first estimate for the 1943-44 rice crop places the area sown to rice at 118,000 acres, compared with the final estimate of 103,000 acres last year, and with the average of 85,000 acres for the 5 years ended with 1942-43, which represents increases of 14 and 39 percent, respectively. Growing conditions have been reported favorable.

### CUBA

Seasonal changes in wholesale beef prices were established by the Cuban Office for Regulation of Prices and Supply by Resolution number 174 on December 31, 1943. The wholesale price in June 1943 had been fixed at 7.9 cents per pound with no provisions for seasonal adjustments. The seasonal wholesale prices now established are as follows: January-February 8.4 cents per pound; March, 8.8 cents per pound; June, 8.4 cents per pound; July-December 7.7 cents. The regulation of December 31, 1943, also established seasonal retail prices. These proved unsatisfactory to retailers, and Havana was virtually without beef for a time because meat retailers suspended business. Accordingly, an adjustment was made on January 11, 1944, which was more satisfactory. The belief is, however, that the price problem has only received a temporary solution. Further increases in wholesale and retail prices appear unavoidable due to the established basic seasonal variation for live-cattle prices.

### ENGLAND AND WALES

The mild weather prevailing so far this winter has been helpful in maintaining cattle in good condition. Milk yields were about average for the month of December for the war years. Winter fodder supplies have been scarcely touched. Ewes are in good condition, generally, but no lambing has taken place except in Dorset.

### BRAZIL

An Executive Decree (Number 6170) published on January 7, 1944, set up an agency (Servico de Ex Pansao do Trigo) to encourage and promote increased wheat production in Brazil.

## GRAINS AND GRAIN PRODUCTS . . .

Gordon P. Boals, in charge

### AUSTRALIA'S WHEAT CROP SMALL; SUPPLY AT SAME HIGH LEVEL AS LAST YEAR

The latest estimate of the wheat harvest just completed in Australia places the production at 99 million bushels, compared with the preliminary estimate of 89 million bushels and the 1942-43 crop of 156 million bushels. The current outturn was harvested from an acreage about 15 percent less than the small acreage of the preceding year.

The reduction of over a third, in this year's crop as compared with the 1942-43 harvest, is attributed largely to lower per-acre yields as well as to the reduced acreage. Factors affecting the yields adversely were the cold dry weather in the main wheat producing regions during much of the growing period, and the shortage of superphosphates.

Widespread rains in the important wheat growing area of New South Wales in October and November improved prospects somewhat, and final estimates for that State place the crop at 42.5 million bushels, or about 3.5 million bushels more than the preliminary estimate. Reports indicate, however, that the quality of the grain in parts of this area may have deteriorated as the result of the rains during the ripening and harvesting period. The outturn in South Australia, now placed at 19 million bushels, was also improved by a favorable change in weather conditions during the latter part of the growing season.

The greatest reduction occurs in the estimate for Victoria where the production is, with two exceptions, the smallest since 1914. The crop as now estimated at 17 million bushels, contrasts with the 1942-43 outturn of 41.8 million bushels, and 36.9 million bushels during the 10 years ended 1941-42. The area seeded was about 345,000 acres smaller than that of last year and was about 35 percent below average. The yield is indicated to be less than half of last year's yield and about 30 percent below average. Yields in Western Australia, on the other hand, were about the same as last year and about average, though production suffered as the result of further acreage curtailment.

The statistical carry-over on December 1 is indicated at 162 million bushels, which, added to production gives a supply of about 260 million bushels for use in the year beginning December 1, 1943. This is virtually the same as the supply available at the beginning of the preceding season when domestic utilization is estimated to have been around 65 million bushels and exports were unofficially placed at 37 million bushels. Allowing some step-up in utilization to cover increased consumption needs and industrial use, the balance for export and carry-over appears to be around 190 million bushels.

Though supplies should be ample for all domestic requirements, some regional supply problems are expected especially in Queensland and Tasmania, due partly to transportation difficulties. Supplies in the main producing areas should be adequate for local needs and for export, but shipments from other States may be needed for



Queensland and Tasmania which produce very little wheat. Exports from New South Wales are largely in the form of flour since milling capacity in that State provides for a surplus for export in addition to the needs of the large population. Transportation of wheat to mills and to the seaboard is considered the chief problem though a secondary difficulty in the milling industry is said to be the manpower shortage.

AUSTRALIA: Wheat supply and distribution, 1939-40 to 1943-44

POSITION	SEASON BEGINNING DECEMBER 1				
	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
	Million bushels	Million bushels	Million bushels	Million bushels	Million bushels
Statistical carry-over,					
December 1 .....	22	81	46	108	162
Production .....	210	82	167	156	100
Domestic utilization ...	58	60	60	65 a/	70
Exports b/ .....	93	57	45	37 :)	
Balance for carry-over ..	81	46	108	162 :)	192

From official and unofficial sources.

a/ Estimate, allowing for increased consumption and for industrial use.

b/ Unofficial estimates.

Transportation problems were considered in allocating the wheat acreage under the 1944-45 goals, with the principal increases planned for the Eastern States. The goal set calls for seeding 8,500,000 acres. This is only 200,000 acres above intended seedings in 1943-44 but is about 570,000 acres larger than the actual seedings reported for that year. Average yields on that acreage would give an outturn of slightly more than 100 million bushels.

Early in the season prices were fixed at the same rates as those of last year, when payments for bagged wheat were 4s. per bushel (about 65 cents in United States currency) at country sidings for the first 3,000 bushels of wheat produced. For the portion of a grower's crop in excess of 3,000 bushels an advance payment of 2s. (32 cents) per bushel was made. A discount of 2d. (roughly 3 cents) per bushel is made for wheat in bulk. To these prices will be added this year an additional 1-1/3d. (about 2 cents) per bushel to cover increased production costs for the current crop. The cost-of-production supplement was announced early in January. Since payments were already being made at the old rate, it was decided to distribute the added amount separately after the main payments have been made.

Production of power alcohol as a substitute motor fuel was begun in December 1943. The first distillery was built in the center of the large New South Wales wheat district. It is estimated that this plant will use around 1,250,000 bushels of wheat a year. Plants of the same capacity are to be built in other important wheat areas, one each in Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia. The consumption of wheat for this purpose is expected to be around 5 million bushels.

AUSTRALIA: Wheat acreage, yield and production by States, average  
1932-33 to 1941-42, annual 1941-42 to 1943-44

STATE	AVERAGE 1932-33 TO 1941-42	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44 <u>a/</u>	1944-45 GOAL
	1,000 acres	1,000 acres	1,000 acres	1,000 acres	1,000 acres
Acreage					
New South					
Wales .....	4,303	3,969	3,033	2,700	3,000
Victoria .....	2,715	2,757	2,145	1,800	2,000
Queensland .....	308	291	335	400	500
South					
Australia .....	3,099	2,326	2,009	1,600	1,500
Western					
Australia .....	2,914	2,653	1,753	1,430	1,500
Tasmania .....	15	6	4	<u>b/</u>	-
Capital					
Territory .....	2	1	1	<u>b/</u>	-
Total .....	13,356	12,003	9,280 <u>c/</u>	7,935 <u>c/</u>	8,500
	<i>Busbels</i>	<i>Busbels</i>	<i>Busbels</i>	<i>Busbels</i>	
Yield per acre					
New South					
Wales .....	12.9	12.2	17.0	15.7	-
Victoria .....	13.6	17.0	19.5	9.4	-
Queensland .....	14.1	10.6	14.9	10.0	-
South					
Australia .....	10.7	13.1	18.2	11.9	-
Western					
Australia .....	11.1	14.1	11.8	11.2	-
Tasmania .....	21.2	24.2	18.2	-	-
Capital					
Territory .....	23.5	23.0	28.0	-	-
Total .....	12.1	13.9	16.8 <u>c/</u>	12.4	-
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	
Production	<i>busbels</i>	<i>busbels</i>	<i>busbels</i>	<i>busbels</i>	
New South					
Wales .....	55,308	48,500	51,693	42,500	-
Victoria .....	36,851	46,954	41,803	17,000	-
Queensland .....	4,345	3,080	5,005	4,000	-
South					
Australia .....	33,013	30,511	36,525	19,000	-
Western					
Australia .....	32,344	37,500	20,600	16,000	-
Tasmania .....	318	145	73	<u>b/</u>	-
Capital					
Territory .....	47	23	28	<u>b/</u>	-
Total .....	162,226	166,713	155,727 <u>c/</u>	98,600	-

From official and unofficial sources. a/ Preliminary estimate. b/ Not available.  
c/ Including estimates for two States for which data are not available.

# COTTON AND OTHER FIBERS . . .

A. W. Palmer, in charge

## HENEQUEN EXPORTS FROM MEXICO INCREASE\*

Henequen fiber exports from Progreso, Mexico, during 1943 are reported at 80,300 tons (of 2,240 pounds) compared with 60,300 during 1942. Exports of tow, bagasse, and waste reached 4,200 tons compared with 2,700 in the preceding year, and manufactures were reported at 16,100 tons compared with 10,000. Exports of henequen in all forms were low in 1942 compared with the preceding year, but were well above those of 1940 which were the lowest in more than a decade.

MEXICO: Exports of henequen fiber and products from Progreso,  
1940 to 1943

(Tons of 2,240 pounds)

COMMODITY	1940	1941	1942	1943
	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons
Henequen fiber .....	47,600	72,900	60,300	80,300
Tow, bagasse, waste ....	2,400	5,300	2,700	4,200
Manufactures .....	9,100	15,000	10,100	16,100

Compiled from official records.

Exports through the port of Progreso are a good measure of the total Mexican henequen exports. During the three years 1940 to 1942, exports from this port were 97, 92, and 99 percent, respectively, of the total exports from Mexico during the corresponding years. Probably all of the henequen that is moved through Progreso is grown in Yucatan, although there are producing areas in northern Campeche, in the southern part of Tamaulipas, and in Chiapas. Somewhat less than one percent of the total crop, however, is grown in the last named area. An average of about 500 acres per year were in production in Sinaloa prior to 1935, but there have been no reports of any since that time. Small amounts of sisal are included in henequen figures from Mexico, because separate data are not available.

MEXICO: Exports of henequen fiber, total and from Progreso,  
1940 to 1943

(Tons of 2,240 pounds)

PORT OF EXIT	1940	1941	1942	1943
	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons
Total, all ports .....	49,200	79,700	61,100	a/
Progreso .....	47,600	72,900	60,300	80,300
Percentage Progreso	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
of total .....	97	92	99	-

Compiled from official records. a/ Not available.

\*Prepared by Cecille M. Protzman.



The countries to which Mexican goods are shipped have changed with war conditions. A total of 79,100 tons of henequen fiber was exported from Progreso during 1939. Of this amount 49,600 tons went to the United States, 28,300 to European countries, and the remaining 1,200 tons to South American countries and Canada. Exports to the United States dropped to 46,600 tons in 1940, but shipments to Europe dropped to a low of less than 500 tons, and ceased altogether before the following year began. A contract between representatives of the United States Government and the henequen growers of Yucatan became effective in May of 1942 and provided that all available exports should be sold to the United States until June 1945. A minimum was set at 62,500 tons per year, to be shipped in approximately equal monthly amounts.

MEXICO: Exports of henequen fiber from Progreso, by countries,  
1939 to 1943

(Tons of 2,240 pounds)

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons
United States .....	49,600	46,600	58,300	58,900	70,900
Europe .....	28,300	500	0	100	0
Canada .....	a/	0	600	1,100	0
Argentina .....	b/ 1,200	500	1,800	0	300
Chile .....	c/	a/	100	0	0
Brazil .....	c/	0	1,800	0	0
Venezuela .....	c/	0	300	200	0
Total .....	79,100	47,600	72,900	60,300	60,300
	:	:	:	:	:

Compiled from official records.

a/ Less than 50 tons. b/ Includes all South American countries. c/ If any, included with Argentina.

Much has been done to encourage production which had declined before the outbreak of war. Prices are now more favorable, easier credit facilities have been made available to growers, and shipping conditions are good. Production data is not yet available for the past two years, but 1942 acreage has been reported as nearly double the previous year in Tamaulipas, and as showing a considerable increase in Yucatan. Favorable weather conditions in 1943, together with continued market demand, has resulted in more new plantings.

Production from these new areas cannot be expected until the plants are about 7 years old. Sisal reaches maturity in about half the time required by henequen, but it is grown in such small quantities in Mexico that the result of its earlier cuttings will be negligible.

Sales on the Progreso market have held about constant during the past two years for fiber, but cordage sales in 1943 were more than double those of the preceding year. Sales during 1943 amounted to 4,450 tons of fiber compared with 4,560 during 1942, 1,890 tons of tow, bagasse, and waste compared with 1,860 tons, and 14,730 tons of cordage compared with 6,940. Cordage sales were heaviest during the first 7 months of 1943, during which time 80 percent of the year's sales took place, compared with 61 percent of the total fiber sales during the same period. It cannot be assumed

that all the henequen entered in domestic sales is consumed locally, as it is possible that a portion was sold after leaving the Merida district and entered foreign commerce from another district.

MEXICO: Sales of henequen fiber and cordage in the domestic market,  
1942 and 1943, and by months, 1943  
(Tons of 2,240 pounds)

YEAR AND MONTH	FIBER Tons	TOW, BAGASSE, AND WASTE Tons	CORDAGE Tons
Calendar year -			
1942 .....	4,560	1,860	6,940
1943 .....	4,450	1,890	14,730
Months, 1943 -			
January .....	480	340	1,350
February .....	430	180	1,750
March .....	60	30	1,760
April .....	470	20	1,720
May .....	620	50	1,010
June .....	300	0	1,950
July .....	340	0	2,260
August .....	80	970	340
September .....	990	40	990
October .....	250	260	650
November .....	230	0	610
December .....	200	0	340

Compiled from official records.

Domestic consumption of henequen has increased in recent years and mills are running on a 3-shift schedule. Heaviest mill production was of binder twine, resulting in exports of 11,200 tons during 1943, but a steady output of rope brought exports of that commodity up to 3,400 tons compared with less than 1,000 tons in 1942. About 1,000 tons of commercial and other henequen and sisal twine, nearly 600 tons of sacks, and 8 tons of cloth also were exported, making a total of 16,100 tons of manufactures from Progreso during the past year. This compares favorably with 10,100 tons exported during 1942, 15,000 during 1941, and 9,100 during 1940. The 600 tons of sacks were sent to Cuba. Except for several small shipments of rope to Peru, all other products went to the United States. Warehouse stocks of both fiber and manufactures are now the lowest in many years.

Exports of short fibers also show an increase over the preceding year. Total 1943 exports were 4,200 tons compared with 2,700 in 1942. These included 2,900 tons of bagasse, 500 of tow, and 800 of waste. During 1941 a total of 5,300 tons of short fibers were exported, but recent demand for long fiber has caused the Government to issue regulations curbing the production of tow from fibers which have enough length to be used for long fiber.

In an effort to find uses for all parts of the crop and thus make production more profitable, some shipments of henequen juice have been sent to the United States for experimental purposes. Reports from these experiments are not yet available.

## NEW ZEALAND HAS RECORD TOBACCO CROP

The 1942-43 tobacco crop in New Zealand is the largest on record. It is reported that by early November 1943 manufacturers had purchased at least 3,200,000 pounds of new-crop tobacco from growers. Earlier estimates had placed the 1942-43 production at about 2,750,000 pounds. The largest crop prior to the 1942-43 harvest was in 1940-41 when 3,143,000 pounds were grown. Average production during the crop years 1937-38 through 1939-40 amounted to only 1,789,000 pounds. The increased 1942-43 production is the result of direct efforts on the part of the New Zealand government to make the country more self-sufficient in supplies of tobacco.

## ALGERIA INCREASES TAXES ON TOBACCO PRODUCTS

A recent decree of the French National Committee, based on a resolution of the Algerian Parliament, establishes sharp increases in the excise taxes on tobacco products of both domestic and foreign origin. Although imports of cigarettes into Algeria from sources other than France have never been significant, it is reported that the domestic industry's concern over possible increased demands for American cigarettes prompted the new taxes. It is reported by Algerian trade sources that the new tax on cigarettes will increase retail prices of American brands to about \$1.08 per packet of twenty. This is nearly 3 times former prices and will amount to a virtual prohibition on imports.

## GUATEMALAN TOBACCO PRODUCTION MAINTAINED

The 1943-44 tobacco crop in Guatemala is estimated at 3.5 million pounds from 12,000 acres, compared with 1942-43 production of about 3.8 million pounds from approximately the same area. Average production during the crop years 1938-39 through 1941-42 amounted to 2.2 million pounds from 5,520 acres. The tobacco grown in Guatemala is sufficient to cover about 95 percent of domestic consumption requirements. It is comprised of dark types of tobacco, used in the manufacture of cigars and low-quality cigarettes, and small quantities of United States flue-cured types.

The tobacco industry in Guatemala consists chiefly of 3 cigarette factories, whose total output amounts to about 75 million pieces monthly, and numerous small cigar producers. About 4 million pounds of tobacco is used annually, principally in the manufacture of cigarettes and cigars, which account for about 50 percent and 45 percent, respectively, of the country's total tobacco consumption. Other tobacco products include chewing, pipe, and snuff tobacco.

Imports of leaf tobacco into Guatemala, largely flue-cured from the United States used in the manufacture of quality cigarettes, averaged about 63,000 pounds during the 4 years 1938-1941. In 1942 and 1943, however, imports were considerably larger. It is reported that imports now amount to about 5 percent of domestic consumption requirements. Imports of tobacco products are negligible, and exports of leaf and products are insignificant.



**SPANISH SUGAR OUTPUT BELOW NEEDS**

Because of short sugar-beet and cane crops in 1943 from which supplies of refined sugar are made available in 1944, it is expected that Spain will have to import approximately 196,000 short tons of sugar this year in order to meet the country's requirements of approximately 550,500 tons. Total production of refined sugar from the 1943 cane and beet crops is not expected to exceed 154,000 tons.

According to reports from mills, approximately 50 percent of the 1943 sugar beet roots were lost as a result of insect damage. A higher official price schedule was expected to result in increased acreage, but the announcement came too late to affect plantings for this crop.

**RECORD DOMINICAN SUGAR PRODUCTION EXPECTED**

Grinding of the 1943-44 sugarcane crop in the Dominican Republic began in late November with prospects for a record sugar production. The quantity of cane available for harvest was estimated to be sufficient to produce about 550,000 short tons of sugar. This compares with the final estimate of 474,000 tons for 1942-43 and 528,000 tons for 1941-42. Growers were reported as being concerned over the labor situation for the new harvest and grinding season. The importation of Haitian labor was being considered as a possible remedy.

Despite the fact that shipments of 1942-43 crop sugar up to the first of January this year have been light, no difficulty is anticipated in finding adequate storage facilities for the 1943-44 crop sugar. The handling of molasses, however, is causing some concern. The reported purchase of molasses from two mills by the Defense Supplies Corporation should relieve the problem, but the sugar interests are wondering if tankers will be available to move it. Approximately 31,000,000 gallons of Black-strap molasses were produced in 1942-43 and a large part remains to be shipped.

**SWEDISH SUGAR PRODUCTION IN 1942-43**

The 1943 sugar-beet area in Sweden is estimated at 124,000 acres compared with 132,000 in 1942 and 135,000 in 1941. The 1943 sugar beet-crop was estimated at 1,984,000 short tons. The out-turn of sugar due to low yields and poor quality (low sugar content), is expected to be 292,000 short tons, a substantial reduction from the early season estimate of 300,000 tons.

Swedish sugar production last season (1942-43) was above that of the two preceding years, but below that of 1939-40, according to a report of the Swedish Sugar Company, the State controlled company which exercises a monopoly over production. Sales of refined sugar in 1942-43 amounted to 292,000 short tons, compared with 271,000 tons the year before, 277,800 tons in 1940-41 and 359,350 tons in 1939-40. The present level of sugar rationing is intended to permit a consumption of 275,500 short tons, which is considerably below the normal rate of 297,500 tons per annum.



## JAMAICAN SUGAR CROP ABOUT SAME AS LAST YEAR

The 1943-44 Jamaican sugar crop was estimated on December 1, 1943, at 173,600 short tons, or approximately the same as last year's output of 184,800 short tons.

## MEXICAN SUGAR INDUSTRY WORKERS GET WAGE INCREASE

Effective December 22, 1943, workers in the sugar and alcohol industry of Mexico were granted a 24-percent increase in wages. The new contract, signed by the industry owners and the union, covers conditions of employment, mutual obligations, working hours, and so forth, and is binding for two years.

## WEATHER CONDITIONS ABROAD

The following summarizes such reports as have been received on weather conditions in specified countries during December 1943 and January 1944.

**EUROPE** In the latter part of December, the weather in the western and northern part of the continent was favorable. Though planting was late in some sections crop conditions were reported as good in most areas with crops entering the winter in good condition. During the last week in January, the weather in the northern and western part of the continent was reported as unseasonably mild with excessive rains. Some fears were expressed of crops developing too fast. The rains, however, missed much of southern Europe where moisture would be very welcome. The Balkans are reported as having a mild winter.

**ENGLAND AND WALES** On the whole November was a mild month in England and Wales but there were some sharp frosts. In the eastern half of England and in the Highlands conditions were fairly favorable. Due to an unusual amount of rain seeding conditions in northern and western England and Wales were poor.

**RUMANIA** Satisfactory rains fell the first week in December after four months of subnormal precipitation. While the amount of moisture was insufficient to offset the prolonged drought, it enabled farmers to make good progress with their plowing and sowing.

**HUNGARY** According to the official Hungarian crop report rainy but comparatively mild weather prevailed during the period November 10-December 7, 1943. Except for a few areas, rainfall was everywhere above normal and in one half of the country it was about three times above normal. The condition of winter crops was generally favorable and plowing and seeding were progressing satisfactorily.

**BULGARIA** Fall planting in most of Bulgaria was completed by the middle of December, the only exception being southern Bulgaria where rainfall was especially heavy.

**CANADA** Temperatures throughout the Prairie Provinces were mild during the month of December and the New Year was ushered in with a continuation of the unusually mild weather which had been characteristic of the fall and early winter. However,

much colder weather set in the early part of 1944 and continued into the third week of January with minimum readings at most stations well below zero. Average temperatures in Winnipeg during December 1943 were about 7 degrees higher than the normal of 6 degrees above zero and 12 degrees over the average for December 1942. It is reported that moisture reserves available for growing crops when seeding starts in 1944 will be the lowest in several years. During the period, September-December, 1943, average rainfall in 13 selected stations scattered throughout the Prairie Provinces was only 2.52 inches as compared with a normal of 3.68 inches and with 4.17 inches in 1942 and 3.77 inches in 1941.

**MEXICO** Weather conditions throughout Mexico were extremely variable during the period November 15-December 15, 1943. Seasonable cold, cloudy and rainy days were felt in the northern states with "northers" and cold weather, accompanied by heavy rains reported throughout the southern States. Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua reported freezes during the month with killing frosts in the Matamoros and Mexicali districts. Coatzacoalcas, in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, reported excessive rains which inundated some areas. However, damage to crops was insignificant. Mazatlan one of Mexico's leading winter vegetable producing areas, suffered damages as a result of rains comparable to that suffered during the September floods and October cyclones. Extremely heavy downpours in the mountains flooded the rivers to such an extent that in many cases livestock and even people were unable to escape. All of the lowlands adjacent to the streams were flooded causing considerable damage. The floods were reported as confined to Sinaloa and did not extend to the State of Nayarit. With the exception of Sinaloa, weather conditions throughout the country were generally satisfactory.

**ARGENTINA** The weather was good during December in practically the entire country excepting in certain parts of the Province of Buenos Aires where rains, which had been frequent but not very heavy, interfered with harvesting activities.

The very hot weather which marked the early part of December came to an end about the middle of the month and was followed by extensive rains which fell intermittently for three days over the greater part of the grain zone. After the rains, the weather was sunny and cool. By the close of the month the northern part of Santa Fe and the southern part of Cordoba were beginning to feel the need of rain. More rain fell in January and the corn crop was in good condition but warmer weather was needed.

**CHILE** Owing to beneficial rains in the early part of December, crop prospects were officially described as very good.

### **GERMAN FOOD PROBLEM AGGRAVATED**

The withdrawal of Axis forces from the eastern front is reported from reliable sources as having aggravated greatly the German food problem. The task of providing food for troops on that front, formerly obtained largely from the occupied areas themselves, is throwing a severe burden on domestic agriculture, it was stated. There is even considerable discussion as to whether or not it will be possible to maintain rations at existing levels.